

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 04497 021739Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, ETRD, EEWT, UR, UK

SUBJECT: BRITISH PETROLEUM-SOVIET DISCUSSIONS OF OFF-SHORE
OIL PROJECTS

1. BRITISH EMBASSY COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR ADVISED COMMATT APRIL 1 THAT BRITISH PETROLEUM DELEGATION DUE ARRIVE MOSCOW APRIL 2 FOR THREE DAYS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVIETS OF POSSIBLE JOINT PROJECTS IN BARENTS SEA. ACCORDING TO UK COUNSELOR, THIS WILL BE FIRST BP-SOVIET EXCHANGES ON BARENTS SEA DEVELOPMENT, ALTHOUGH HE NOTED THAT BP HAD HELD RATHER TENTATIVE TALKS WITH SOVIETS SOME TIME AGO ON POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING OFFSHORE DEPOSITS IN KARA SEA. HE OBSERVED THAT IN VIEW OF UK AUTHORITIES, SOVIETS HAVE SHIFTED THEIR ATTENTION OF LATE FROM KARA SEA TO BARENTS SEA AS POTENTIAL AREA FOR OFF-SHORE OIL PRODUCTION.

2. UK COUNSELOR ALSO POINTED OUT THAT CFP DELEGATION WAS IN MOSCOW SHORTLY BEFORE CHIRAC VISIT FOR DISCUSSIONS OF
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 04497 021739Z

BARENTS SEA DEVELOPMENT. IN UK VIEW, CFP, DUE TO ITS LONG-
STANDING SHORTAGE OF CRUDE SUPPLIES, WOULD BE MOST PROMISING

CANDIDATE AMONG MAJORS FOR COOPERATIVE VENTURE WITH SOVIETS UNDER WHICH WESTERN COMPANY WOULD TAKE PAYMENT FOR SERVICES /EQUIPMENT/TECHNOLOGY IN FORM CRUDE DELIVERIES. IN VIEW FACT THAT DELIVERIES FROM ANY BARENTS SEA PROJECT COULD NOT BE AVAILABLE PRIOR TO 1982, BP IS LESS INTERESTED SINCE BY THAT TIME ITS NORTH SEA AND NORTH SLOPE (ALASKA) PRODUCTION WILL BE UNDERWAY. UK COUNSELOR ALSO ADVISED THAT SHELL DELEGATION HAD DISCUSSED BARENTS SEA WITH SOVIETS BUT WAS NOT TERRIBLY INTERESTED.

3. COMMENT: WITH APPEARANCE OF BP ON SCENE, THIS MEANS THAT ALL OF "SEVEN SISTERS", WITH EXCEPTION OF TEXACO AND CALSO, HAVE SENT DELEGATIONS TO MOSCOW FOR DISCUSSIONS OF BARENTS SEA POSSIBILITIES. WITH ADDITION OF CFP, THIS MEANS THAT SOVIETS MAY BE ABLE TO PICK AND CHOOSE AMONG SEVERAL ATTRACTIVE OFFERS.
STOESSEL

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